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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /065 W
----------220740Z 007654 /10
R 211441Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2403
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0357

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR ET SO SU
SUBJ: EPMG ATTACKS SOMALI VISIT TO KHARTOUM

1. JANUARY 21 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED PRESS STATMENT FROM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHARACTERIZING JANUARY 18 PRESS STATEMENT IN KHARTOUM OF SOMALI VICE-PRESIDENT AHMED SULEIMAN AS "MALICIOUS, CRUDE, AND TRANSPARENT".IN NOTING AHMED SULEIMAN REPORTEDLY IN KHARTOUM TO DELIVER SPEICAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT SIAD TO PRESIDENT NIMEIRI, FONMIN SPOKESMAN STATED GSDR VICE-PRESIDENT HAD TOLD PRESS IN KHARTOUM THAT ETHIOPIA CONSPIRING TO HARM INTERESTS OF ARAB STATES, HARBORING SUDANESE DISSIDENTS AND UNFIT TO CONTUNUE AS HOST FOR OAU HEADQUARTERS.

2. CHARACTERIZING KHARTOUM STATEMENT AS UNFRIENDLY, FONMIN STATEMENT CONTUNUED:
"WORDS UTTERED BY SOMALI VICE-PRESIDENT WERE NOT ONLY GRATUITOUS BUT ALSO GIVE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO PUT PRESSURE ON ETHIOPIA IN VAIN HOPE OF ACHIEVING
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ITS CLAIM TO ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY. UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, WHEN MISUNDERSTANDINGS ARISE BETWEEN TWO AFRICAN STATES, IT IS INCUMBENT UPON ALL OTHER AFRICAN STATES TO HELP PARTIES CONCERNED TO REMOVE CAUSES OF THEIR DIFFERENCES. HOWEVER, SOMALI VICE-PRESIDENT, REFLECTING HIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY, WAS APPARENTLY TRYING TO ACERBATE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. OF COURSE, HE COULD NOT PRETEND THAT HIS MOTIVE IN MAKING

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STATEMENT THAT HE MADE WAS BEYOND SUSPICION. HIS STATEMENT CLEARLY SHOWED HOW SO-CALLED "PROGRESSIVE" SOMALIA WAS ACTING IN LEAGUE WITH REACTIONARY FORCES TO CONCER PRESSURE AGAINST ETHIOPIA".

3. STATEMENT CAREFULLY AVOIDS CRITICISM OF SUDAN. EPMG CLEARLY UNHAPPY WITH GSDR ATTEMPTS FURTHER TO AGRAVATE EPMG-SUDANESE RELATIONS. WHILE EPMG NORMALLY SOMEWHAT PARANOID OVER GSDR ACTIONS, PROSPECT THAT AS RESULT INCREASED BILATERAL COOPERATION ETHIOPIA'S TWO MOST SENSITIVE NEIGHBORS MIGHT END UP WITH SIMILARLY HOSTILE POSITIONS ON TWO VITAL EPMG FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS-- ERITREA AND DJIBOUTI CAN HARDLY BE REASSURING AT TIME WHEN MILITARY SITUATION IN ERITREA APPEARS TO BE CHANGEING FOR WORSE AND TFAI INDEPENDENCE LOOMING.

4. FOR KHARTOUM: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE BRIEF REPORT ON CIRCUMSTANCES OF AHMED SULEIMANS'S VISIT AND ON WHAT HE ACTUALLY SAID.
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